

CLAIMS:

1. A method of distributing flexible bags filled with beverage or liquid food product under sterile conditions to a consumer of said beverage or liquid food product in return for payment and comprising the following steps of distribution:

a) locating said flexible bags, filled with beverage or liquid food product, in a bulk transport container having capacity for a plurality of flexible bags;

b) transportation, by a commercial distributor, of the bulk transport container, in which the filled flexible bags are located, to a consumer of said beverage or liquid food product; and

c) unloading a required quantity of flexible bags filled with beverage or liquid food product for delivery to the consumer; and

d) delivering each flexible bag for dispensing the beverage or liquid food product contained in the flexible bag to be consumed by an end consumer, wherein, through each step, hazard and critical control points during distribution and dispensing are minimised.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said flexible bags are filled through a spout or tap forming part of each flexible bag avoiding residue from a sealing process.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the commercial distributor fills the flexible bags.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein said beverage contained in a flexible bag is drinking water.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein said distribution method is "one way" without recovery of flexible bags for re-use.

6. The method of claim 4 wherein said commercial distributor positions said flexible bag containing water in a dispenser for delivery of the water to the end consumer.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein said commercial distributor supplies and maintains the dispenser in return for payment.
8. The method of claim 4 wherein said bulk transport container is of variable capacity adaptive to varying quantities of flexible bags in accordance with consumer demand.
9. The method of claim 8 wherein said bulk transport container is of cubic design having smooth wall and base construction reducing risk of damage to, and contamination of, said flexible bags.
10. The method of claim 9 wherein said bulk transport container is made of polymer suitable for use in food grade environments.
11. The method of claim 6 wherein the flexible bag incorporates at least one handle.
12. The method of claim 11 wherein said flexible bag is positioned in said dispenser by said at least one handle.
13. The method of claim 12 wherein said flexible bag, when positioned in said dispenser, allows substantially complete drainage of the liquid contents from said flexible bag.
14. The method of claim 13 wherein said dispenser has a housing having a base, the base being angled with respect to a vertical axis of the housing, to allow substantially complete drainage of the liquid contents from said flexible bag.
15. The method of claim 14 wherein said housing of said dispenser has an inner wall and a shield is located between said flexible bag and said inner wall of said housing to protect a lower portion of the flexible bag from damage.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein said flexible bag is communicated with a tap for delivery of water for consumption by the consumer and said shield is located proximate said tap.

17. The method of claim 1 wherein a commercial distributor comprises at least one party selected from the group consisting of: a single entity, and a vertically integrated entity, servants, contractors and agents of either entity.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein a consumer is a bailee of the flexible bags.

19. A method of distributing drinking water contained in flexible bags filled with drinking water under sterile conditions to a consumer of drinking water in return for payment and comprising the following steps

a) filling of the flexible bags with water through a spout or tap forming part of each flexible bag;

b) locating said flexible bags filled with beverage or liquid food product in a bulk transport container having capacity for a plurality of flexible bags;

c) transportation, by the commercial distributor, of the bulk transport container, in which the filled flexible bags are located, to a consumer of said drinking water;

d) unloading a required quantity of flexible bags filled with drinking water for delivery to the consumer; and

e) mounting a flexible bag in a dispenser for dispensing drinking water for to an end consumer,

wherein, said distribution method is "one way", without recovery of flexible bags for re-use, and wherein, through each step, hazard and critical control points during distribution of drinking water are minimised.